

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 MCE-00 HA-05 ACDA-12
EUR-12 SMS-01 /081 W
-----078344 111336Z /44

R 111151Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5898
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA
CHUSMTM DHAHRAN
USMTM RIYADH
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE/ECJ4/7-SA
SECDEF WASHDC

S E C R E T SANA 4419

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, YE
SUBJECT: ARMS FOR YEMEN

BEGIN SUMMARY: YAR PRESIDENT SALIH HAS NOT RESPONDED TO
WRITTEN SUGGESTION OF 31 AUGUST THAT HE AGREE TO BEGINNING OF
AIRLIFT OF EQUIPMENT. WE CONTINUE TO PROD HIM TO ACT. END
SUMMARY.

1. FRENCH EMBASSY IN SANA IS PICKING UP STORIES LOCALLY
FROM SOVIETS THAT SOME SHIPMENTS OF NEW T-54 TANKS HAVE
BEEN MADE IN LAST TWO WEEKS TO YAR AND WILL BE FOLLOWED
SHORTLY BY SMALL ORDER OF FOUR MIG-21S. STORIES CANNOT BE
CONFIRMED AT MOMENT AND, IN VIEW OF OTHER PRESSURES WHICH
VARIOUS PARTS OF YARG IS MOUNTING ON SOVIET AID, SOVIET
CONSULATES, SOVIET SCHOLARSHIPS PROGRAM AND SOVIET EMBASSY
PERSONNEL, IT IS UNCERTAIN THAT NEW SOVIET ARMS DELIVERIES
WOULD BE ACCEPTED. SAUDI MILITARY ATTACHE, SALIH HUDAYAN,
SAYS HE KNOWS OF NO RPT NO AGREEMENT BETWEEN HIS GOVERNMENT
AND YEMEN GOVERNMENT TO GO AHEAD WITH SUCH LIMITED

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SHIPMENTS IN ABSENCE OF AMERICAN DELIVERIES.

2. ON RETURN OF CHARGE FROM LEAVE ON MUSLIN 'ID AL-
FITR PERIOD, ON 8 SEPTEMBER, THERE WAS NO RPT NO REPLY
FROM YAR PRESIDENT ALI ABDALLAH SALIH TO LETTER DISCUSSED
IN SANA 4294. DURING CALL ON CHARGE AND DCM DESIGNATE
GNEHM TO FOREIGN MINISTRY ON 10 SEPTEMBER, DEPUTY

FOREIGN MINISTER KIBSI ASKED FOR OUR VIEWS ON DELIVERY OF EQUIPMENT. AS KIBSI WAS CLEARLY SPEAKING ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER ASNAJ, CHARGE TOOK OCCASION TO OUTLINE IN DETAIL BACKGROUND OF US ARMS OFFER, NOTING THAT PRESIDENT SALIH HAD WISELY REPAIRED, DURING INTERVIEW WITH CONGRESSMEN, MISUNDERSTANDING THAT HAD FOLLOWED REJECTION OF IMPACT PACKAGE. CHARGE TOLD KIBSI THAT IT PROBABLY IMPOSSIBLE AT THIS POINT TO DELIVERY ANY OF PROFFERED MILITARY EQUIPMENT BY 26TH OF SEPTEMBER, BUT OFFER OF AIRLIFT SHOULD NEVERTHELESS SERVE AS VALUABLE SYMBOL OF US POLITICAL SUPPORT AND OF NEW MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS WITH US. KIBSI REPLIED YEMENIS CONCERNED SOVIETS WOULD INCREASE THEIR MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO PDRY AS RESULT OF CUT ALL TIES WITH YAR. CHARGE REPLIED SOVIET DECISION TO MAKE MASSIVE ARMS DELIVERIES TO PDRY HAD BEGUN SOME YEARS AGO AND WOULD CONTINUE WHETHER OR NOT YEMENIS ARMED THEMSELVES EFFECTIVELY FOR DEFENSE. IMPORTANT THING WAS TO MOUNT A DETERRENT ON YEMENI SIDE TO GROWING MILITARY CAPABILITY IN SOUTH. WITHOUT MENTIONING PARTICULAR ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT WHICH OFFERED BY SAUDI-US TEMA, CHARGE SAID THAT PACKAGE REPRESENTED A FIRST STEP, ALTHOUGH THAT STEP, LIKE ALL SUCCEEDING STEPS, WOULD HAVE TO BE TIED TO EFFECTIVE TRAINING AND TO DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPORT FACILITIES IN ORDER FOR ALL PARTIES TO BE SURE THAT EQUIPMENT COULD BE USED EFFECTIVELY, IF NECESSARY. KIBSI SEEMED SECRET

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TO AGREE AND SAID THAT HE HAD EARLIER UNDERTAKEN TO DISCUSS THESE POINTS WITH OFFICERS AROUND ALI ABDALLAH SALIH LIKE AHMAD IMAD, MOHAMMED SANABANI, MOHAMMED AL-ANSI, AND OTHERS.

3. CHARGE WENT ON TO SAY THAT US SIDE EAGER TO BEGIN AND LOOKS FOR EARLY REPLY FROM PRESIDENT SALIH TO EMBASSY LETTER OF 31 AUGUST. AFTER YEMENI REJECTION OF INITIAL OFFER, US SIDE SAW IMPACT PACKAGE AS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT TEST THAN AT OUTSET OF YEMENI-US ABILITY TO WORK TOGETHER IN COMPLICATED MILITARY ENDEAVOR. CHARGE SAID THAT, WHILE DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE ONGOING ABOUT FURTHER EQUIPMENT DELIVERIES, PACKAGE OFFER WAS DEFINITELY FIRST PHASE. CHARGE SAID THAT HE DOUBTED THAT USG WOULD EVER ACCEPT YEMENI POSITION OF TYING FIRST PHASE TO COMMITMENTS ON FOLLOW ON DELIVERIES.

4. LATER IN MORNING, CHARGE AND DCM GNEHM WENT OVER SAME GROUND WITH SAUDI MILITARY ATTACHE, SALIH HYDAYAN URGING HIM TO ADVISE PRESIDENT TO GIVE EARLY AND FAVORABLE RESPONSE TO 31 AUGUST LETTER.

5. CHARGE AND DCM GNEHM WILL SEE PRIME MINISTER
ON 12 SEPTEMBER AND, AMONG OTHER THINGS, WILL URGE HIM
TO PROD PRESIDENT TO RESPOND TO YOUR OFFER.

COMMENT: AS WE KNOW NOTHING ABOUT OUTCOME OF DE-
LIBERATIONS IN NSC ON ARMS FOR YEMEN, WE ARE WORKING IN
THE DARK. CHARGE HAS, FOR THAT REASON, AVOIDED SEEKING
AN INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT SALIH. INDIRECT APPROACHES
DISCUSSED IN CABLE ABOVE MAY YIELD SOME RESULTS, NEVER-
THELESS. AT THIS POINT, IF USG READY TO GO BEYOND ITS
PREVIOUS POSITION IN RESPONSE TO KHALID LETTER, IT WOULD
SEE REASONABLE TO HAVE AMBASSADOR LANE DELIVER THE
GOOD NEWS. LANE ARRIVES IN ONE WEEK'S TIME AND SHOULD
BE ACCREDITED BEFORE 26TH SEPTEMBER.

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMS, NEGOTIATIONS, MILITARY SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SANA04419
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780369-0744
Format: TEL
From: SANA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780981/aaaacpco.tel
Line Count: 137
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1484352
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ARMS FOR YEMEN BEGIN SUMMARY: YAR PRESIDENT SALIH HAS NOT RESPONDED TO WRITTEN SUGGESTION OF 31 AUGUST THAT HE AGREE TO B
TAGS: MASS, YE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9097e852-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014